

Guest Feature

Increase Sales and Customer Satisfaction with an Organized Retail Space

By Chris and Susie Hayman

Create a more positive customer experience and sell more to existing customers! Customers make over 50% of their buying decisions in your store; therefore, an organized retail space plays a critical role in finalizing sales and driving revenues. So, where and how do you start?

Organizing your retail store is about making small changes that focus on four key areas – merchandising, inventory management, customer management & marketing and administration. It involves making a comprehensive plan to ensure that your store front, back room and office are customer ready and operationally efficient. Take those first steps and try some of our best tips for creating an organized and efficient retail environment. Transform your space and guarantee your customers a positive experience!

Merchandising – The Key to Driving Your Sales

Maintain a clean image of your store from the outside. Clean glass and exteriors free of unnecessary signs and decals give customers a strong first impression that your store is clean, organized and ready for business.

Minimize clutter in your store front, so that customers focus on your merchandise and its value. The shopping experience begins in the first 5 – 10 feet. Keep aisles wide and free of merchandise, equipment and fixtures.

Assign a home for all products. Merchandise your products in categories and sub-categories that make sense to your customers – type, brand, size, color, etc. Look at your store through the customer's eyes.

Keep your check-out and register area clean and free of clutter. Don't overload your check-outs with impulse items. Provide space for the product(s) being purchased and the transaction.

Inventory Management – The Answer to Your Bottom Line

Organize inventory to ensure efficient re-stocking/re-ordering and to avoid lost sales and overstocks. Allocate space as to how quickly products sell. Label storage areas so that you and your employees know where to find them.

Create separate areas for seasonal and/or promotional items, and supplies used to operate your business. Avoid storing them with everyday merchandise.

Receive and put away vendor shipments the same day. This minimizes clutter and maintains inventory accuracy.

Customer Management and Marketing - The Measurement of Your Success

Maintain organized, detailed customer sales information and track sales by customer. Identify who your customers are, what they purchase and when. Use this to follow-up on sales and respond to concerns.

Identify your best customers and market directly to them. Provide a frequent shopper program that offers special promotions or discounts.

Create tickler files to follow-up on customer orders and requests. Develop procedures and assign responsibilities to ensure that your system works.

Track your marketing efforts to measure their effectiveness. Use coupons with promotional codes; ask the customer "How did you hear about us?"

Administration – The Backbone of Your Business

Organize files so that you know where to retrieve them. Determine alphabetized categories and sub-categories for paper files – use color-coded hanging files for the categories and file folders for the sub-categories. Categorize electronic files in folders and sub-folders – replace paper files with electronic ones when you can.

Keep files you refer to all the time on your desk, easily accessible. Use desktop sorters or baskets to organize your "to do" and "action" files. Create a system for incoming documents.

Assign a home for everything. This includes: un-opened mail, papers you don't

know what to do with, and information you need to act upon or review later.

Document your policies and procedures for optimum efficiency. Detail the workflow process needed for the smooth operation of your business.

Use one calendar or electronic device that works for you. Having appointments and deadlines in one place avoids mistakes. Scheduling time for tasks and projects increases productivity.

Organizing is an evolving process. By implementing a few of our tips, you are on your way toward having a more organized retail space. You are more efficient, establish a positive first impression, see sales increase and achieve customer satisfaction. That equals success! For more tips on achieving an organized retail space, contact us at 804-360-8337.



Chris Hayman, owner of CSE Associates (chris@cseassoc.com), is a retail improvement specialist with over 30 years of experience in business strategy development and process improvement in the retail and wholesale industries. His specific areas of expertise include: inventory management, merchandising, marketing, store operations and end-to-end supply chain management, across various retail segments.



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Happy Holidays!

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